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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SP](#) [GG](#) [RU](#) [YI](#)
SUBJECT: SPAIN ON RUSSIA-ABKHAZIA, KOSOVO PRECEDENT

REF: STATE 14840

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

(C) DCM delivered reftel demarche to Spanish Director General for North America and Europe Pepe Pons on February 15, underscoring the distinctions between Kosovo and Abkhazia. Pons told DCM that he had just met with the Russian Ambassador, who he said had gone out of his way to say that Russia did not intend to recognize Abkhazia; therefore, the Spanish were not overly concerned. Pons had called the Russian Ambassador in to explain the February 14 comments of President Putin in which he said, "in Spain the people do not want to live under a single state." Ambassador Kuznetsov apparently apologized for the comments, and he later made a statement to Spanish wire service Europe Press that "I want to emphasize that there is no reason to interpret (Putin's) declarations as an interference in internal Spanish affairs." In any case, the Spanish do not view Kosovo as a precedent for other European ethnic conflicts. Vice President Fernandez de la Vega addressed the "Kosovo precedent" at a February 15 press conference saying that Spain is opposed to the unilateral declaration of independence, adding that Kosovo "has nothing to do with Spain...the situation in Kosovo is not in any way comparable to any situation in Spain."
AGUIRRE